

REMARKS
ON
EMIGRATION,
WITH A
DRAFT OF A BILL.

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1831.

REMARKS,

&c. &c.

THE object of the following pages is to exhibit, in a compendious form,

- I. The necessity of adopting some immediate measures for promoting an extensive Emigration from the Agricultural Districts of England and Wales.
- II. The possibility of accomplishing that object.
- III. The nature of the legislative enactments which would be requisite.
- IV. The subordinate arrangements which might be required to give effect to those enactments. To which will be added,
- V. A draft of the Emigration Bill, which, it is conceived, should be introduced into Parliament in the present Session.

Reverting to this arrangement, we propose to commence by stating,

I. The necessity of adopting some immediate measures for promoting an extensive Emigration from the Agricultural Districts of England and Wales.

The British empire is now exposed to greater dangers than any internal causes ever created in an extensive and civilized country. What we have to dread is, not a contest between party and party, or between sect and sect, but between the poor and the rich, between the few who have property and the many who have not; between the thousands who, as landlords and farmers, have something to keep, and the hundreds of thousands who think they have nothing to lose.

Partly by force, and partly by bribes, the late paroxysm has been suspended; but how soon, and with what vehemence, may it be expected to return?

To suppose that the peasantry can be kept down by force with their present unity of feeling and means of communication, is to shut our eyes to all that is passing in Europe. To suppose that, if the rate of wages which they have extorted can be paid, the labourers will rest satisfied with their victory; that they will strive to earn their spoil by diligence, and to husband it by economy and self-restraint, is to be ignorant of the principles of human nature. To suppose that such a rate of wages *can* be paid,—to suppose

that the farmers of a given parish can, under any remission or abandonment of rent, tithes, and taxation, continue to pay 2*s.* 3*d.* a-day in winter, and 2*s.* 6*d.* in summer, to all the labourers of the parish, however great their numbers, and however little their diligence, is to be guilty of the same misconception as that of the labourers themselves, who believe the fund for the payment of wages to be inexhaustible, and all the sufferings of the poor to arise from the niggardliness with which that fund is doled out to them by the rich.

Sooner or later these promises must be broken, and the peasantry will rise again,—confident, from having been successful ; and furious, from having been deceived.

Even if the next disturbances are not hurried on by a scarcity, they certainly will create one. Scarcity and disturbance in the country inevitably produce distress in the manufacturing towns ; and if the machinery, on which our export trade depends, is subjected to the fate which has fallen on thrashing machines, and threatened paper machines, what will remain, not merely of our greatness or our prosperity, but of our social existence ?

Can we hope that the union with Ireland, the funded debt, or the Church Establishment, will survive ? Is it certain that we shall still have a King, or a House of Lords, or even a House

of Commons, representing the intelligence or the property of the country?

To unfetter commerce,—to diminish, to the slight extent to which it is possible, the amount of taxation, and to shift its pressure where it is unequal or injudicious,—and, above all, to amend the poor laws, and to improve the religious and moral education of the people, are the means by which the present disorder might have been prevented: they are, therefore, the means by which, if the country were once restored to a sound state, its recurrence might be obviated.

But they are remedies of a slow and distant operation. They would not restore the balance between the fund for the maintenance of labour and the number of labourers to be maintained; nor could one of the most important of them,—the amendment of the poor laws,—be safely adopted, while the labourers, in perhaps one-third of our parishes, are too numerous to earn an independent subsistence.

It appears to be generally admitted that a large Emigration, an Emigration in which the sacrifices must bear some proportion to the benefits, in which much must be expended in order that something may be retained, is, if practicable, the only immediate remedy. And it appears to be admitted that it is a remedy which every year renders more difficult and less efficient.

It is, however, objected, that if the effect of

Emigration were to add a fresh stimulus to population, the benefit would be temporary and the evil permanent. This is true: and no Emigration, therefore, could be of permanent service, unless accompanied by the measures which we have already indicated for increasing the productive powers of industry, improving the character of the working classes, and repressing the increase of population, or, rather, withdrawing the stimulus to population, which is so abundantly afforded by the present administration of the poor laws. Accompanied by such measures, we do not believe that an extensive Emigration would occasion a proportionate increase of population. But, even if it were to have that effect, in the first place, a considerable interval (sixteen or seventeen years at least) must occur before that effect could be fully produced, and the intermediate saving would be very great; and, in the second place, we are not now in a state of profound tranquillity, considering whether we shall or shall not adopt Emigration as a benefit; but whether, in imminent danger, we shall fly to it as a resource.

The events of the last four months have already cost us more than the immediate expense of an extensive Emigration. The waste of capital and the waste of time might perhaps be estimated; but at what rate are we to value the loss of confidence? What sum would each inhabitant of a disturbed district have given to have been saved,

not merely the actual expense, but the anxiety of that unhappy period? Four more such months might produce results, which we do not like even to suffer ourselves to anticipate—results which mere money cannot even measure.

II. The practicability of effecting such an Emigration is the next subject to be considered.

The Appendices to the Reports of the House of Commons' Committee, which sat in the Sessions of 1826 and 1827, contain a body of evidence so copious, and in some respects so complete, that the chief difficulty consists in making a judicious selection of the proofs and illustrations which they supply; and the limits, within which the present general outline of the question must be compressed, will not allow a liberal use of those materials. It might, indeed, be superfluous to quote largely from the examinations subjoined to those Reports, because it is understood that Mr. Richards, the gentleman who was deputed to survey the British Provinces in North America with an express view to the subject of Emigration, is about to make a Report to His Majesty's Government, which will probably, in some respects, supersede the labours of the Committee. Nothing further will, therefore, be attempted in this place, than an enumeration of the principal conclusions which seem to have been established, with some

occasional references to the testimony on which they rest.

First, then, it appears that the expense of maintaining a man, with his wife and three children, *as paupers*, in a parish in the agricultural districts of England, may be taken, on a general average, at 25*l.* per annum. This estimate, however, supposes them to be supported with the most rigid parsimony. At the rate of wages and allowances lately exacted by the insurgent population in some parishes in Sussex, the maintenance of such a family would amount to 40*l.* 13*s.* per annum. The term "paupers" is here used, not in its original sense, as descriptive of persons living altogether on alms, but in that technical sense which the administration of the poor laws has, unhappily, rendered but too familiar. Such a family, therefore, if they remained in England, would, it may be said, replace, by the value of their labour, some part of the cost of their subsistence; and it may be thought that the whole of the 25*l.*, or of the 40*l.* 13*s.* annually expended for their support, could not be correctly represented as an uncompensated loss to society at large. It may be freely admitted, that before we can determine the precise amount of that loss, the value of their labour must be deducted. But that deduction would, in almost all cases, be inconsiderable, and, in very many, utterly insignificant. The value of a pauper's work is generally small,

often nothing. A small number of independent labourers will usually perform much more effective and valuable labour, than a much larger number of paupers. The national wealth would consequently sustain little or no diminution by the subtraction of the labour which the pauper emigrants would have executed. It involves, therefore, no material inaccuracy to say, that the annual payment of 25*l.*, or of 40*l.* 13*s.*, is a loss for which the public at large receives no compensation whatever.

Secondly,—The expense of removing to British North America a family making this constant demand on the national resources, is variously estimated. As far as experience has hitherto gone, it may be safely taken at 70*l.*, in which is included every charge, from the moment of quitting their residence in England until the time when they begin to subsist in the Colonies, on the profits of their own industry. This estimate is founded on experiments which have been tried on a comparatively small scale, and under many disadvantages, which, upon a more systematic plan of Emigration, might readily be obviated. The charge of 70*l.* indeed, greatly exceeds the amount within which it has been found possible, by private persons, to execute similar designs. Thus, a mercantile house at Liverpool has, for some years past, been in the habit of contracting for the removal to New York of families,

consisting of two adults and three children, for 25*l.*; engaging to give the Emigrants, on their disembarkation, twenty shillings each, towards their immediate necessities. A Gentleman residing in Lower Canada has recently offered to effect the settlement of several thousand Emigrants, annually, in that province, at a charge not exceeding 14*l.* for a family of five persons, from the time of their landing. But, supposing the estimate of 70*l.* to be accurate, it would appear, that without any increase of the existing charge, the expense of the removal of such a family would be entirely defrayed, without any new assessment, within less than three years. Or, if the sum recently extorted by menaces is to be paid, the family remaining in England would, in less than two years, cost more than the whole expense of their transfer to America. But if so transferred, the burthen, as far at least as those individuals are concerned, would cease for ever at the expiration of the three or the two years. It would, in effect, be the substitution of a very short annuity, for life annuities of an equal amount. This, however, is not the most favourable view which could justly be taken of the project. The heavy life annuities now payable to the paupers, might, after their Emigration, be commuted for a long annuity of twenty, thirty, or even forty years. On that supposition, the annual burthen would be so diminished as to

become scarcely perceptible. Those who now pay 25*l.* per annum for the maintenance of such a family, might, by such an arrangement, escape that charge, at an annual expense of as many shillings, or even less.

Thirdly,—It appears that, in the year 1827, the vessels outward-bound from the United Kingdom to British North America, for timber and other bulky goods, the produce of that continent, had an unemployed tonnage to the amount of about 400,000 tons. This estimate, which was made by a gentleman of great practical acquaintance with that trade, was, it must be admitted, conjectural; and upon such a subject it is, perhaps, vain to expect very exact information, either from private or official sources. But the course of the North American trade is notoriously such as to create a very large amount of what is technically called “dead freight.” A large proportion of the vessels engaged in it sail either wholly or partly in ballast. Supposing the estimate already quoted to be accurate, it would follow that, without engaging a single ship for the express purpose of removing Emigrants, the means already exist for the annual removal of a much larger number than would probably ever sail from this country in a single year. It is to be understood, as a general rule, that each ship could conveniently carry a number of passengers equal to the number of her unoccupied tons.

It scarcely requires to be stated that the "dead freight" of the Canada timber ships might be engaged by the Government for the purpose of Emigration, on very low terms. It may be calculated that the supply will very considerably outrun the demand; and if the proper public department were to advertise for tenders, they would have the full benefit of an eager competition among the ship-owners.

Fourthly,—The power of the British Colonies to absorb an additional population so considerable as that which, in order to give effectual relief to this country, must be removed, is attested circumstantially, and in great detail, by a large body of witnesses. Without anticipating the more recent, and probably the more exact, information which the Report of Mr. Richards will supply, it may be sufficient, for the present purpose, to say, that the vacant territory in Lower Canada has been estimated, by persons intimately acquainted with the province, at about seven millions of acres; and, in Nova Scotia, at two millions. In New Brunswick, the amount is supposed to be about the same as in Nova Scotia. In Cape Breton the quantity is calculated at about six hundred thousand acres. In Newfoundland, and Upper Canada, the tracts of country which yet remain to be settled are said to be very extensive, but no estimate can be quoted on which much reliance

could be placed. Without adverting to the resources of the Cape of Good Hope, or the Australian colonies, the general conclusion, from the evidence before the Canada Committee, would seem to be, that the British Transatlantic possessions, on the continent of North America and the adjacent islands, embrace a territory of ten times the extent, with a population not equal to one-fourth, of that of Ireland. It will be understood that the lands to which reference is thus made do not include sterile or inaccessible tracts, (of which, indeed, the extent in British North America is quite indefinite,) but, as far as any reliance can be placed on the witnesses examined by the Committee, consist of soils which would abundantly repay the cost and labour of cultivation.

It having been thus briefly shewn that an extensive Emigration is urgently required by the present exigencies of the country, and is a practicable measure, it is proper to state,

III. The nature of the legislative enactments which would be requisite for effecting that purpose.

As it is proposed to subjoin the draft of the Bill, which we conceive it would be expedient to pass into a law, nothing beyond the general nature of the projected enactments will be stated in this place.

It is conceived, then, that a board of Commissioners should be appointed, who would be designated "Commissioners of Emigration." A Secretary, with two or three Copying Clerks, would complete the establishment. The Commissioners should act under the instructions of one of the Secretaries of State, probably the Secretary having the department of the Colonies. They should twice in each year make to his Majesty reports of their proceedings, which reports should be laid before Parliament.

Having constituted this body, it is proposed to provide, by the Act, a method by which any person rateable to the poor-rates in any parish might convene a meeting of the vestry to deliberate on the question, whether a contract should be made between the parish and the Commissioners, for the removal of any paupers who may be willing to emigrate.

A numerical majority of votes, or a majority in value, would be sufficient to carry the question in the affirmative.

Whenever a question of this nature had been proposed and passed affirmatively, the Bill would prescribe the form of a written contract to be signed by the Secretary to the Commission, by the overseers of the parish, and by such of the intended Emigrants as might be of the age of twelve years or upwards. The Emigrants must sign in the presence of a Justice of the Peace,

who would be required to satisfy himself that the contract was entered into freely, and with a full understanding of its nature and effect.

The Lords Commissioners of the Treasury would then be authorised to take all the necessary measures for effecting the Emigration,—for the maintenance of the Emigrants until their removal,—for their support during the voyage,—for their subsistence until they should be actually settled at the place of their destination,—and for providing them with implements of husbandry and other necessities. The expense would in the first instance be defrayed out of such money as Parliament might appropriate for that purpose.

To provide for various subordinate arrangements, and to obviate the frauds which might otherwise be practised, it is proposed to authorise the King in council to establish all necessary rules for securing the diffusion of authentic information amongst the proposed Emigrants,—for preventing the removal of infirm persons, and of children apart from their natural guardians,—for preventing the Emigration, at the public expense, of persons competent to bear the charge,—for maintaining good discipline in the ships,—for the protection of the Emigrants against frauds at the places of embarkation and disembarkation,—and for their orderly settlement on the lands to be appropriated for that purpose. The King in council would also be authorised to enforce the

observance of such rules by imposing penalties for the breach of them. The orders thus made would be laid before Parliament.

To reimburse the expense to be thus incurred by the public, it is proposed that an annual rate should be levied in the parish from which the removal might take place, bearing a definite proportion to the whole charge; which may either amount to one-fifth or one thirtieth part of that charge annually, or any intermediate proportion. When the whole advance, with interest at four per cent. had been repaid, the rate would cease.

Finally, it would be provided that all paupers thus removed should lose their settlement, and with it all claim to relief from any parish in England or Wales.

Such are the provisions for the establishment, of which it would be necessary to invoke the aid of Parliament. In explanation of their necessity, and to shew by what means such a statute might be carried into execution, we proceed to state,

IV. The subordinate arrangements which would be required to give effect to these enactments.

It may, in the first place, be mentioned, that this scheme does not suppose any addition to the permanent establishments of the country, nor even any temporary increase of expenditure, except to an extent altogether insignificant. No doubt

can be entertained that many persons, eminently qualified for such duties, would cheerfully act as **Honorary Commissioners of Emigration**, from motives of a public kind. Nor is it less evident, that amongst the salaried Officers of the Crown, several might be selected, who, without any additional remuneration, would willingly undertake this office. There never was a time when official men would more promptly answer any call for increased exertion. At the present moment there are not wanting many urgent motives of a selfish nature, for engaging in any useful employment, by which the reproach of indolence may be averted. The buildings at present occupied by the Colonial department would, it is believed, afford sufficient space for the reception of the proposed Commissioners. The only charges which it would be necessary to make for such an establishment, would consist of the salaries to be paid to the Secretary, and, perhaps, to two copying Clerks. The whole ought not to exceed 1,000*l.* per annum.

The necessity of establishing such a board, will be perfectly clear to any persons who happen to be conversant with the management of public business in any of the chief departments of Government. Whatever may be the popular opinion to the contrary, the fact is indisputable, that the Clerks and subordinate officers engaged in those branches of the public service, are in general too few for the effective discharge of their present

duties. If the superintendence of an extensive system of Emigration were added to the present labours of any one of the Secretary of State's offices, it would be vain to expect the punctuality and exertion, which are indispensable to the success of such an enterprise.

The general duty of the Commissioners would be to collect from the British North American Provinces, and to circulate through this country, authentic information respecting the colonization of those settlements, and the removal of emigrants to them—to communicate with the different departments of Government, through the agency of which the Emigration would be effected—and to make all the necessary contracts and arrangements with the overseers of parishes.

The Commissioners should lay down general rules, to be modified and improved with increasing experience, as to the forms in which parishes should make tenders for the removal of paupers—as to the ages and sexes of the emigrants to be removed—and for ascertaining that such paupers were in a proper state of health to bear the voyage and change of climate. It would be their duty also to indicate to the overseers of the parishes whence emigrants were to remove, the time and place of embarkation, and the mode of conveyance to the proper port for that purpose.

The Bill, as has been seen, would delegate to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury the

office of making all necessary arrangements for executing the contracts which might be made with parishes. It is not of course meant that their Lordships should personally undertake duties of so much detail, and productive of so great a degree of labour. The delegation of this trust to *them* is necessary only because various subordinate offices, under their immediate control, would, it is conceived, be properly employed for this purpose. It is more accurate in principle, as well as more brief and convenient in form, to refer, in an act of Parliament, to the chief superintending department than to the minor dependant Boards.

It is therefore proposed, that as often as any body of emigrants may be ready to take their departure, the Commissioners should communicate to the Navy Board a list of the number of the proposed Emigrants, and their ages and sexes. The Navy Board would then be charged with the duty of making the necessary contracts with the owners of ships engaged in the Canada trade, or in any other of the trades in which it is customary to send across the Atlantic vessels, either wholly or partly in ballast. The Victualling Board would be required to make the necessary arrangements for supplying the shipping in question with proper quantities of provision. At each port of embarkation one of the officers of customs would be specially charged with the superintendence of

the Emigrants during any unavoidable detention there; and, for that purpose, *unseaworthy* ships, of a small class, might be procured and fitted up by the Navy Board as receiving ships. The arrangements for the journey of Emigrants from their parishes to the port of embarkation, could scarcely be undertaken by any public department, but must be matter of discussion and agreement, in each particular case, between the Commissioners and the parochial authorities. On the landing of any body of Emigrants on the coasts of North America, they should again be placed under the superintendence of one of the officers of customs at the port. By him, with the least possible delay, they should be placed under the charge of some person in the Surveyor General's department, whose duty it should be to accompany them to the place of their intended settlement.

The preceding short statement of the official agency by which an extensive Emigration might be effected, may of course require some correction before the scheme can be actually reduced into practice. Enough however, we apprehend, has been said to shew that the existing establishments of the country might be conveniently employed for every purpose towards which the interference of Government is necessary or desirable. Provision is made for unity of action amongst these different bodies, by placing them

all in correspondence with the proposed Commissioners. Provision is made for their punctual obedience, by the dependence of them all on the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury. Security is taken against the prodigality in which the inferior agents in such an enterprise might otherwise indulge, by the Treasury exercising their usual control over the issue of all money demanded for this service. To say that these securities are incomplete, is simply to assert the self-evident maxim that human society, especially as at present constituted in this kingdom, affords no absolute protection against the negligence and waste of those who serve the public. It is enough to answer that the security proposed is very considerable, and, as appears to us, is the best which, under all circumstances, could be taken.

It may probably be thought that this plan throws too much on the Government, and that the same objects would be as easily and more frugally accomplished by arrangements to be made between particular parishes and private persons. The disadvantage of the interference of Government with any undertaking in which their aid is not essential, is readily allowed. The following, are the reasons which, in the present case, may perhaps prove the existence of such a necessity.

The measure of Emigration must be undertaken on a very extensive scale, in order to yield the

advantages anticipated from it. If it is entirely conducted by the Government, in its different departments, each particular parish will have the benefit of what may be called wholesale prices. It would be superfluous to comment on the superior cheapness with which contracts for tonnage, provisions, bedding, lodging, &c. could be made, if those articles were taken up on a large scale by the Government, than if they were provided by separate contractors in detail. The interference of the Government departments would be still more necessary for the prevention of those frauds and oppressions which unhappily must be anticipated from private speculators. In the year 1828, the Emigrants to British North America from Ireland had accommodations on board the vessels in which they sailed, scarcely superior to those of the negroes in a slave ship. Numbers died of famine and sickness, and the survivors, on their landing, propagated disease throughout the British Provinces. They were cast on such parts of the coast as best suited the convenience of the masters of the vessels, and they wandered about the maritime villages and towns in a state of the most abject want. It is a curious proof of what may be called the absorbing power of those countries, that, even in this wretched state, the Emigrants were rapidly merged in the general mass of society, and ceased to be objects of compassion. But the rumour of their sufferings was

circulated amongst their friends in Europe, and the Provincial Assemblies were so indignant at what had occurred, as immediately to pass laws against the introduction of paupers in future, without the special license of the Governor. The late Passengers' Act was passed by the British Parliament, to prevent the recurrence of similar cruelties. To a certain extent it has proved efficient. But no law can anticipate all the frauds which human ingenuity and avarice would devise, to enrich the private contractor, at the expense of large bodies of poor Emigrants. At every port there would be *undertakers*, bidding each other down for business of this kind, and the parishes would, as a matter of course, accept the lowest tender, although the contractor's profit might be earned at an immense expense of individual suffering.

But even if motives of economy and humanity could not be alleged in favour of placing the whole arrangement in the hands of Government, a just regard for the success of the measure itself, would, we think, prescribe that course. It is of the utmost importance that Emigration should be *popular*, both in this kingdom and in the Colonies. There is abundance of prejudice to contend with already; and if well authenticated accounts should appear of losses of life by the employment of ill-found ships, or of disease on board, originating from improper clothing, food,

or lodging, a more effectual obstacle to the success of the project could scarcely be imagined.

It must also be borne in mind that while the Emigrants from the same neighbourhood should, as far as it is practicable, be kept together, the stream of Emigration must be broken into different parts, and judiciously directed to those particular countries in which the Emigrants could be most conveniently received, and that the supply to each must be carefully adjusted, from time to time, to what may be considered as a varying demand. Now, without the constant exercise of the authority of the State, all this will be impracticable. Halifax, as the nearest, and Quebec, as the most frequented port, would receive multitudes of Emigrations, who might much more conveniently to themselves, and to the colonies, have been landed at Cape Breton or at St. Andrews. Independent Emigrations, also, would disconcert every plan which could be made for the reception and prompt location of such persons.

The Bill does not contain any provision regulating the preparation and allotment of lands in the British provinces. Such enactments would have been superfluous, because the unaided powers of the Crown are sufficient for the purpose. But though the Act would be silent on this subject, the importance of an early, methodical, and vigilant attention to it can scarcely be exaggerated.

Amongst the most urgent duties of Government is the obligation of arresting, by the most peremptory instructions, any further improvident alienations of the uncleared lands still belonging to the Crown.

It has been strongly felt by the framers of this Bill, that upon entering into an unexplored path in legislation, the difficulty of anticipating all possible exigencies is insuperable. It is therefore proposed to delegate to the King in council, the office of framing all such subordinate rules as may be necessary to the efficiency of the law. As those rules would be laid before Parliament, it would be in the power of either House, by an address to the Crown, virtually to revoke them. It would be superfluous to quote precedents in proof of the constitutional propriety of this mode of proceeding. They are at once recent and numerous. The *convenience* of such legislation will not be disputed.

Although the plan which has been detailed supposes that all the expense of Emigration should in the first place be defrayed by the State, yet the advance is to be repaid by an annuity chargeable on the parish rates, and expiring at any time which might be fixed, not more near than five, nor more remote than thirty years, from the date of the contract. As has already been said, it is a plan for the conversion of life annuities into annuities for a number of years certain. That

view of the case does not indeed do justice to the argument, although, in a popular sense, it may be stated in that manner with sufficient correctness. It would be left to each parish to determine for itself, within the prescribed limits, the duration of the annuities with which it would become chargeable. It is obvious that a great latitude of discretion must be allowed on this subject to answer the different exigencies of different places. Thus, in a parish chiefly owned by one or two rich proprietors, a very early extinction of the debt might be practicable and advantageous. In places where persons assessed to the poor-rate are very numerous, and occupy the lands upon leases of the ordinary length, a distribution of the burthen over several successive years would of course be preferred. In either case the demands of the pauper and his family would be for ever extinguished. The price of that extinction would be paid in some cases by a smaller, and in others by a larger number of annual instalments.

According to the present proposal, nothing is asked of the pauper except the renunciation of his settlement, and all claim to future parochial relief in England. The plan of requiring from the Emigrant the repayment, by instalments, of the cost of his own removal, was very largely discussed, and generally recommended by the witnesses before the Emigration Committee. But, at the

present moment, it seems necessary to offer the Emigrants more liberal terms. It may reasonably be doubted whether the events of the last few months may not have created a strong indisposition to relinquish the temporary advantages which have been extorted, and of the value of which a very exaggerated estimate has probably been formed by the labouring classes. If, in the approaching summer, any large number of persons could be removed upon the terms at present proposed, the favourable accounts they might transmit of the results might, perhaps, tempt others to follow them on more onerous conditions. But it is conceived that those who may have ventured first should have the encouragement of knowing that, on their arrival in America, they would enter on the new scene of action before them exempt from debt and its consequent embarrassment.

Such being the motives—the practicability—the general outline—and the principal details of this scheme, it remains only to annex,

V. A draft of the Emigration Bill which, it is conceived, should be introduced into Parliament in the present Session.

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A B I L L

Intituled, An Act to promote the Emigration to
His Majesty's Possessions abroad, of Persons
chargeable or likely to become chargeable to
the Rates for the Relief of the Poor in
England and Wales.

I. ~~Whereas~~ it is expedient to promote the
Emigration to His Majesty's possessions abroad, of
persons chargeable, or likely to become chargeable,
upon the rates of parishes in England or Wales, who
may be desirous so to emigrate, : it therefore
Enacted, by the King's most excellent Majesty, by His Majesty
and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual may appoint
and Temporal, in this present Parliament assembled, Commissioners
of Emigration.
and by the authority of the same, That it shall be
lawful for His Majesty, his heirs and successors, by a
commission under the great seal of the United
Kingdom, to constitute and appoint such three or
more persons, as to His Majesty shall seem meet, Com-
missioners for the purposes hereinafter mentioned,
during the pleasure of His Majesty, his heirs and
successors.

II. And be it further Enacted, That the said
Commissioners shall be attended by a Secretary, to be
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by his Majesty, his heirs and successors, in like manner appointed; and that all letters sent to the said Secretary through His Majesty's post-office, and relating exclusively to the business of the said commission, shall be delivered free of postage; and that all letters addressed by the order of the said Commissioners to any person or persons, and relating exclusively to the business of the said commission, and being superscribed externally with the words, "Commissioners of Emigration," and with the ordinary signature of such Secretary in his own hand writing, shall be delivered according to such address, or at the nearest post-office, free of postage.

III. And be it further Enacted, That the said Commissioners shall receive from time to time, for their guidance in the execution of their said commission, such instructions, not being repugnant to the provisions of this Act, as shall for that purpose be issued to them by His Majesty, through one of his principal Secretaries of State, and shall, twice at the least in each year, report to His Majesty, through such his Secretary of State, their proceedings in the execution of such their commission, each of which reports shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament within the shortest possible period next after the same shall have been so made.

The Commissioners to act under the Instructions of the Secretary of State, and to report their proceedings twice in each year.

Such Reports to be laid before Parliament.

IV. And be it further Enacted, That it shall be lawful for any one or more person or persons assessed to the rates for the relief of the poor in any parish in England or Wales, to deliver to any churchwarden or overseer of the poor of any such parish, a requisition for convening a meeting of the vestry of such parish, to

Mode of convening meetings of Vestries for deliberating on the removal of Paupers as Emigrants.

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deliberate and decide upon the propriety of applying to the said Commissioners for assistance in promoting the Emigration to some of His Majesty's possessions abroad, of any person or persons chargeable or likely to become chargeable to the rates of such parish, which requisition shall be in the form set forth in the Schedule to this Act subjoined, marked with the letter (A); and it shall be the duty of such churchwarden or overseer, as the case may be, by a note in writing endorsed upon such requisition, to appoint the time and place at which a meeting of such vestry shall be holden for the purposes aforesaid, which time shall not be less than one nor more than three weeks next after the date of such requisition, and it shall be the duty of such churchwarden or overseer, as the case may be, to deliver such requisition so endorsed, as aforesaid, to the incumbent or other officiating minister of such parish, who shall, during, or immediately after, divine service on each Sunday which may intervene between the receipt by him of any such requisition, and the time appointed for holding such meeting, read, or cause the same to be read, audibly, in such parish church, together with a notice of the holding of such meeting, which notice shall be in the form set forth in the Schedule to this Act subjoined, marked with the letter (B).

V. And be it further Enacted, That at the time and place so to be appointed as aforesaid, a vestry shall be holden, at which each person assessed to the poor rate of such parish, and not then in arrear on account of any such assessment, shall be entitled to attend and vote, and any such vestry may once, but not more often, be postponed by adjournment to any day

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not more distant than three weeks; and if any Sunday or Sundays shall intervene between such original and such adjourned meeting, then, but not otherwise, public notice shall, in manner aforesaid, be given of such adjourned meeting; and at every such meeting, the officiating minister, or in his absence one of the churchwardens of the said parish, or in their absence one of the overseers of the poor thereof, or in their absence some person to be for that purpose appointed by the majority of voters there present, shall preside, and shall put to the vote the question proposed for decision in the requisition aforesaid, and every such question shall pass in the affirmative if the major number of persons present at such meeting shall vote in favour thereof; or if any vote or votes be then given in favour thereof by any person or persons who may be assessed either singly or together on account of the poor rates of such parish, in a sum amounting to or exceeding one moiety of the whole of such parochial assessment; and a minute of the proceedings at any such vestry shall forthwith be prepared and signed by the person presiding thereat, whose duty it shall be to transmit to the said Commissioners a copy under his hand of any such minute to be by them preserved and recorded.

VI. And be it further Enacted, That when any such question as aforesaid shall have so passed in the affirmative as aforesaid at any such meeting, it shall be lawful for the said Commissioners to contract with the overseers of the poor of any such parish for the removal, to any of His Majesty's possessions abroad, of any person or persons having a legal settlement in such parish, and willing so to emigrate.

Commissioners may contract with Parishes for the removal of Emigrants, after a resolution to that effect has been passed by the Vestry.

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VII. And be it further Enacted, That all such contracts as aforesaid shall be in writing, and shall be in the form set forth in the schedule to this Act annexed, marked with the letter (C); and every such contract shall be signed by the secretary to the said commission, and by the overseers of the poor of the parish with which such contract is to be made, or one of them, and by such of the persons proposed to be so removed as are of the age of twelve years or upwards, which last mentioned persons shall, in all cases, sign such contracts in the presence of some one or more of His Majesty's justices of the peace of and for the county, riding, division, district, borough, or place in which such parish may be situate, which justice shall, and he is hereby required to satisfy himself that such contract is freely and voluntarily signed by such last mentioned persons, and that they fully understand the nature and effect thereof: and such justice shall, and he is hereby required thereupon to set and subscribe his name to every such contract, as a witness to the execution thereof by such persons; and every such contract shall be so signed in triplicate, and one part thereof shall be preserved and recorded by the said commissioners, and one other part thereof shall be preserved and recorded by the overseers of the parish from which any such removal is to be made, and the third or remaining part thereof shall be delivered to the person or persons so to be removed, or in case of joint contract, to any one of such persons to be selected for that purpose by such justice.

The form of
such Contracts.

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tracts shall be
signed.

VIII. And be it further Enacted, That it shall be lawful for His Majesty, his heirs and successors, or for the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, from

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time to time, to take all proper and necessary measures for effecting the emigration or removal to His Majesty's possessions abroad of every person with or in respect of whom any such contracts as aforesaid may be made, and for the maintenance of such persons until such their removal, and for their support during the voyage to any such possessions, and from the time of their disembarkation until the period of their arrival at the place of their ultimate destination, and for providing them with such implements of husbandry and other necessities of life as may be essential to their first settlement upon any lands on which they may be placed on their arrival in any such possessions.

IX. And for defraying the expenses of any such Emigrations, it shall be lawful for the Lords Commissioners, for the time being, of His Majesty's Treasury, from time to time, to issue, or cause to be issued, any such sum or sums of money as shall hereafter be for that purpose appropriated by any Act or Acts of Parliament to be hereafter in that behalf made and provided.

Expenses to be defrayed out of monies to be granted for that purpose by Parliament.

X. And whereas, for the effectual execution of the several provisions aforesaid, and for the prevention of abuses, it will from time to time be necessary to make divers regulations which cannot at present be foreseen: Be it therefore Enacted, That it shall and may be lawful for His Majesty, his heirs and successors, by any order or orders to be by him or them made with the advice of his or their Privy Council, to establish and provide all proper and necessary rules and regulations, for ascertaining that all persons for whose removal any such contracts as aforesaid may be made, and who are of sufficient age

His Majesty in council may make all necessary subordinate Regulations.

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to exercise their own judgment respecting the expediency of such proposed removal, are freely assenting thereto, and for ascertaining that all such persons have received fair and impartial representations of the probable consequences of such removal, and for preventing any contracts being made for the removal of infirm, weak, or sickly persons, or for the removal of young children unattended by their parents, or by their nearest surviving adult relatives, or by some adult relative charged with and providing for the proper care of such children, and for preventing any contracts being made for the removal of persons competent to sustain the expense of their own removal, or of persons whose parents or other near kindred may be competent to sustain that expense, and for securing method, order, economy, and dispatch, in effecting such voluntary Emigrations, and for maintaining order and good discipline on board any vessels in which any such Emigrants may be so removed, and for the protection of such Emigrants against any frauds or impositions to which they might otherwise be exposed on their arrival at their respective places of embarkation and disembarkation, and for the economical, regular, and expeditious conveyance of such Emigrants to such places of embarkation, and from such places of disembarkation to the places of their ultimate destination, and for the orderly settlement of such Emigrants on any lands which may be for that purpose appropriated and set apart in any of His Majesty's possessions abroad; and for the better enforcing obedience to such rules and regulations as aforesaid, it shall be lawful for His Majesty by any such order or orders in council to subject any person or persons being parties to any such contracts as aforesaid, or engaged in carrying the same into exe-

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cution to any such moderate penalties for the violation of any such rules and regulations as to His Majesty, his heirs and successors, shall seem meet, and to direct how and in what manner such penalties shall be imposed, enforced, recovered, and applied; and it shall be lawful for His Majesty, his heirs and successors, from time to time, as occasion may require, with the advice of his or their Privy Council, to revoke, amend, alter or renew any such order or orders, and every such order in council shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament, at the shortest practicable time next after the date thereof respectively, and the same shall respectively be of the same force, virtue, and effect, as if the same had been herein contained and hereby expressly enacted.

Which must be
laid before Par-
liament.

XI. And be it further Enacted, That in each and every parish, from which any such removal as aforesaid shall take place, there shall be levied upon all property liable to be assessed to the relief of the poor, a rate, the annual amount of which shall be determined in the contracts so to be made between the said Commissioners and any such parish officers as aforesaid, but which annual amount shall not in any case be less than one-thirtieth nor more than one-fifth part of the sum for which the said Commissioners shall have so contracted for the removal of any Emigrants from the said parish, and such annual rate shall be raised, levied, and collected by the overseers of every such parish in such and the same manner, and by such and the same ways and means, as any rate made for the relief of the poor of such parish may by law be raised levied and collected; and it shall be the duty of the overseers of the poor, for the time being, of every such parish, on

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the Twenty-fifth day of March, and on the Twenty-ninth day of September in each year, or within fourteen days at furthest next after such of those days respectively, to pay over to the receiver general of taxes of and for the county, riding, or district in which such parish may be situate, the full amount of such rates by two equal payments, and so on from year to year until the whole of the sum by His Majesty, or by the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury contracted to be advanced in the execution of any such contracts as aforesaid, or such smaller sum as shall have been actually advanced, shall have been repaid with interest, at the rate of four pounds per centum per annum.

XII. And be it further Enacted, That every person who, by virtue of any such contract as aforesaid, shall be disembarked in any of His Majesty's possessions abroad, shall thenceforth lose his or her settlement in the parish from which he or she shall be so removed, and in any other parish in England or Wales, and shall have no further claim or title in the law to relief from the rates of any parish in England or Wales.

All Emigrants so removed to lose their settlements, and claim to Parochial relief.

XIII. And be it further Enacted, That this Act may be altered, varied, or repealed, by any Act or Acts to be passed in this present session of Parliament.

XIV. And be it further Enacted, That the several powers and authorities hereby vested in the said Commissioners, and in the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury respectively, shall continue vested in them for five years, and from thence until the end of the then next session of Parliament, and no longer.